

Education, the Ballot, or the Tenure of Land?

Now, though we hardly expect our readers to have arrived, at 18, at any definite conclusions or deep knowledge of these questions, it would be as well if their daily newspaper reading were turned to some immediate use.

We know that we never read anything more carefully than when we have some immediate object in knowing it; that we think much more steadily and deeply when we have one particular object to fix our thoughts on, than when we are merely taking in general ideas. How many of us, in the ordinary course of things, ever think at all till we have some special reason given for thinking? Where there is no demand for political knowledge there is no likelihood of a great supply. Let a Debating Society establish a demand; there is little danger of the supply failing in times like these, when politics are the most exciting life and death questions.

The House of Lords is threatened. How many fellows could explain its constitution to-day? What a torrent of information would be poured forth in its defence, were it fixed as the subject for debate a fortnight hence. Our experiences would tell us that the School is keenly alive to political interests: a Debating Society is just what we want to turn it to good account.

We hope that before many days such an institution will give those of us who wish it a chance of fitting together our stray ideas, and of making both wider and more accurate our knowledge of events going on around us; only remembering always that we have come to test our theories, not to abuse our opponents, and that our object is not the immediate triumph of our cause by a majority in division, but the gradual establishment of our opinions by honest argument and candid recognition of valid objections. We are probably all of us by nature Tories. Let us all come prepared to sacrifice our feelings, when they are proved contrary to expediency and justice.

D.

RUGBY SCHOOL CONCERT, JULY, 1868.

There can be little doubt that, as a general rule, a long preface, be its subject what it may, is an evil. Few readers will deny that it is a bad sign on taking up a new book to find that the author has thought it necessary to occupy a dozen pages or more in this

way. And this is true almost universally. Good news, like good work, needs no preface: and we may generally suspect there is something dark in the background—some, perhaps, slight defect to be pointed out—where we are only led to our real subject in hand through a long train of introductory remarks.

This will be our excuse for beginning without delay our observations on the Rugby School Midsummer Concert of 1868. Where the success was so complete, so universally acknowledged—where the strain that we have to take is throughout one of commendation and praise—where the journalist's task of criticism has to be laid aside, and the pleasanter task of showering honours upon undeniable merit has to be entered upon—we have no right to indulge any secret fancy we may have for a long spun preface. And that our last Concert was a success there can be little doubt. The selection of the music was judiciously and artistically made; the performance of the music was creditable to the highest degree, revealing that which we are ever glad to welcome in our School doings—*progress*. The company was large and unanimous in its plaudits; the feeling that examination and its cares were over gave fresh spirit to the performers, and everyone, perhaps, excepting half-a-dozen poor wretches who could scarcely keep their minds from wandering to a certain list to be read out upon the morrow, felt that they could justly sing, in the words of Mr. Moberly's capital song,

"Ergo fratres gaudeamus
In loco desipiamus."

The Concert opened with Farrant's stately anthem, "Lord, for thy tender mercies' sake," the simple strains of which lost none of their effect by being followed by music of a more modern and florid style. This was followed by a selection from Sterndale Bennett's "Woman of Samaria," which, together with several other new works, was produced for the first time at the Birmingham Festival of 1867, and met with an unequivocal success. That this oratorio will maintain its position among succeeding generations of musical critics, or that it will take its stand with the sublime masterpieces of Mendelssohn, or the now time-honoured works of Handel, it may be almost too much to hope, but the chorus, with its beautiful introduction for the tenors, produced a marked impression, and may be expected to do so wherever it is heard.

After the brisk and pleasing anthem, "I

will lift up mine eyes," had been given, the *Elijah* selection began. The beautiful air, "O rest in the Lord," requiring as it does the utmost depth and delicacy of voice, was a bold feat for so young a singer to attempt: but Mr. Arkcoll, we think, showed signs of true musical feeling. The equally charming quartette, "Cast thy burden," which might, perhaps, have been better for a little more rehearsing, was followed by the superb chorus, "Thanks be to God," which, being the culminating point of the first part of the *Elijah*, is one of those works by which Mendelssohn has established his claim to be the *very first* among composers of Oratorio. In such a piece the choir fully felt the value of Mr. Goldschmidt's skill in wielding the *bâton*. The second subject, "But the Lord," begun by the basses, and taken up in succession by all the voices, was given, considering its difficulty, with creditable precision.

The second part opened with the march from Gounod's *Faust*—any defects in which were to be attributed far more to bad luck than to any inefficiency of the performers. The flute, Mr. Leslie, whose performance has been so deservedly popular at previous concerts, was taken ill at the last moment, and prevented from performing: the clarinet, from some occult cause, refused to yield to the by no means unskilful efforts of Mr. Stevenson; and altogether, as we heard from one of the performers, the music had been much better done at rehearsal. We must not omit to notice the addition to the band of Mr. H. W. Gardner, for whom, as a performer, we augur a successful career. Mr. Micholls performed with his usual brilliancy of execution and taste, first a solo by Grieg, and afterwards a Sonata in A, with the violin, by Mozart, in which Herr Petterson delighted the audience by his skill: the only criticisms we can venture to pass was that the piece was perhaps rather too long. "What does little birdie say," a new song by Sullivan, was chosen as Mr. Anstice's solo. Personally we can only say he gave us much more satisfaction than in his former triumph—"Toujours gai." The "Carmen Feriale," by the Rev. C. Moberly, brought the concert to an end: few will be found, we think, to grumble at its frequent repetition. The "Viva la Compagnie," sung by Mr. Rowden, caused considerable amusement, containing several very good hits. We have trespassed so far on our readers' patience that any remarks upon the general state of the choir must be deferred to a future num-

ber. We conclude with reminding the School how large a debt of gratitude they owe to Mr. Goldschmidt, for his conducting, to the Rev. Charles Smith, for his most artistic accompaniments, and to Mr. Edwards and Herr Petterson, for their untiring exertions on behalf of the School Choir.

NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY.

At a Meeting held June 6th, Papers were read "On a visit to some Salt Works in Cheshire," by F. R. Smith, and on "Dimorphism in Plants, especially the Cowslip and Purple Loose-strife," by the President.

At a Meeting held June 27th, a Lecture was given by the Rev. T. N. Hutchinson, "On permanent axes of rotation, and the Gyroscope." The success of the experiments was received with applause.

It was announced that Mr. Longstaff (late Secretary to the Society) had lately sent "Addenda and Corrigenda to the list of Lepidoptera," and that the Natural History Society lately established at Wellington College had been taken into union for the exchange of publications.

Duff (Arnold's), Sandars (School-house), and Rivington (Hutchinson's) have been elected Associates for their assistance this season in the Botanical Section, and Bull (Elsee's) as an Entomologist.

At the last Meeting of the Term, held July 11th, a paper "On the Rugby Gravels," was read by E. Cleminshaw. He mentioned the different discoveries that have as yet been made in our High and Low Level Gravels, and urged the importance of examining any pits which may hereafter be opened.

With a view to encourage original observation, the Society intends to offer a prize to the School, for essays to be sent in to the Secretary after Christmas; the writer to choose any subject of Natural History he likes, and the merits of the essay to be mainly the *originality* of the observations or descriptions it contains.

THE RIFLE CORPS.

On Monday, July 20, the Wimbledon Eleven went up to London, in order to take part in the competition for the Ashburton Shield the next day. Our Team had been so well instructed, and had thrown themselves with such spirit into their work, that in the opinion of many good judges their chance